

3.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The section presents the details of the Gallery at Central Park project (proposed project) in terms of the project objectives, the project setting, project characteristics, and construction schedule and activities. Fairfield Development L.P., the project applicant, is requesting approval of a Planned Development-Master Community (PD-MC) zoning district, Development Area Plans (DAPs), a vesting tentative map, and a development agreement for the construction of a residential community. The approximately 26-acre project site, located at 900 Kiely Boulevard, was previously occupied by a Kaiser Permanente Hospital that was recently relocated to a larger site on Homestead Road and Lawrence Expressway in Santa Clara. The vacant main hospital building and other medical buildings remain on the site; however, the only existing use on the site is approximately 30,000 square feet of medical/administrative office space on the northern parcel of the site. The lease of these medical offices will terminate in December 2010 at which time they will relocate.

The applicant, Fairfield Development L.P., proposes a residential development project that would demolish the existing buildings on the site and construct 806 housing units including 536 multifamily (two apartment buildings) units, 152 town houses, 73 row houses, and 45 single-family units with an overall site density of 31.0 dwelling units per acre. The 45 single-family units would not be developed by the project applicant but by another developer; the construction and operation of the 45 single-family units is considered and evaluated in this Draft EIR in order to evaluate all potential impacts of the project as a whole.

A total of 1,790 parking spaces, which include surface parking spaces and two multi-level parking garages within each apartment building, as well as other infrastructure improvements (i.e., i.e., sewer, water, and storm drainage) needed to serve the proposed housing development would be also constructed. Access to the site would be provided from Kaiser Drive and Kiely Boulevard. Approximately 9 acres of green space (e.g., open areas on site; trails; playgrounds; and front, side, and rear setback areas, etc.) would be provided on the site. Recreational amenities at the site would include opportunities for both active and passive recreation, including a swimming pool and spa areas for the town houses and row houses on the site, and pedestrian and bicycle trails. The proposed site plans include the planting of new trees and shrubs as well as preservation of some of the existing trees on the site.

3.2 PROJECT APPROVALS

The project site is currently zoned General Office (OG) by the City's Zoning Map and designated Medium Density Residential by the City's General Plan. A small portion of the site north of Kaiser Drive is zoned Professional (OA) and designated Moderate Density Residential. The applicant is requesting approval for a Planned Development-Master Community (PD-MC) zoning district, DAPs, a vesting tentative map, development agreement, and demolition permit to allow for the construction of a residential development. The PD-MC zoning permits "any residential, commercial, office, research and development; or public uses if they are in harmony with other authorized uses and serve to fulfill the function of the planned development while complying with the City's General Plan." The PD-MC zoning district procedures, described in Section 18.56.050 of the Santa Clara City Code, requires the submittal of two separate applications, one for the master community plan and the second one for the DAPs. These two submittals may be filed at the same time, but require separate City Council approval. The City Council must approve the master community plan, before it approves any one or all of the DAPs. The DAPs must conform to the approved master community plan and must meet the requirements in Section 15.56.090 of the Santa Clara City Code.

3.3 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The City of Santa Clara has developed the following primary objectives to satisfy the requirements of 2008 California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Statutes and Guidelines Section 15124 (b).

- Provide development consistent with the Santa Clara General Plan and the City's long-term development goals.
- Provide up to an additional 806 housing units in the City of Santa Clara and region.
- Provide housing in proximity to jobs, services and transportation.
- Provide affordable housing on the project site.
- Provide additional housing units to assist the City in meeting the City's housing objectives.
- Create residential development compatible with surrounding uses.
- Re-develop a vacant and under-utilized site that is visually degraded.
- Provide on-site drainage consistent with the City's adopted standards.
- Implement smart-growth principals by redeveloping underutilized properties and higher density projects along established transportation corridors.

The applicant's project objectives are to develop a well-designed, economically feasible residential community that consists of a variety of residential products and unit types, and incorporates smart-growth elements such as redevelopment of underutilized properties and implementation of higher-density development along established transit corridors. The proposed project has also been developed to meet the goals of the Housing Element of the Santa Clara General Plan. Key objectives of the project are listed below.

- Provide a number of residential units at the project site that is consistent with the number that is currently allowed by the City's Housing Element (Section 3.4.3), but that is sensitive to the surrounding residential uses. Provide optimal development design with appropriate amenities.
- Maximize the amount of green space (approximately 34 percent of the site) at the project site, which is currently approximately 85 percent impervious and approximately 15 percent pervious (landscaped), to provide passive and active recreational opportunities.
- Provide affordable high-quality housing within the community.
- Provide a mixed-density housing community to serve the housing needs reflective of the social and economic diversity and needs in the City.
- Orient the different housing types on site in a manner that is compatible in density and size to the various housing densities surrounding the site.
- Remove the existing hospital structure, which does not meet seismic State standards for a hospital use.
- Re-use of demolition materials (e.g., concrete, steel, etc.) on site to reduce landfill waste and incorporate sustainable building practices.
- Develop and implement green building standards for the proposed buildings and other applicable structures on site.
- Provide affordable housing opportunities to help meet the City's annual regional housing needs, including housing for lower and moderate-income households.

3.4 PROJECT SETTING

According to the Section 15125(a) of the *State CEQA Guidelines*, the environmental setting, that is the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project, is the on-the-ground condition at the time the notice of preparation is published. The environmental setting normally constitutes the baseline relative to which a lead agency determines whether an impact is significant. The notice of preparation for the Gallery at Central Park EIR was published on January 30, 2008. The baseline conditions for the project site and surrounding area, as they existed at that time are described below.

The City of Santa Clara is located in the Santa Clara Valley near the southwestern end of San Francisco Bay (see **Figure 3.0-1, Project Location**). The Santa Clara Valley is bounded on the west by the Santa Cruz Mountains and on the east by the Diablo Range. The City of Santa Clara is bordered by San Jose to the north, east, and south, and Sunnyvale and Cupertino to the west.

The project site consists of three parcels (Parcels 1, 2, and 3) and is located in the west central portion of the City. It is accessible by three major San Francisco Bay Area freeways: the 101 Highway (US 101) to the north, Interstate 880 (I-880) to the east, and Interstate 280 (I-280) to the south. The main arterial streets that provide access from the freeways to the project area are El Camino Real, Kiely Boulevard, Homestead Boulevard, Bowers Avenue, and Saratoga Avenue. Kaiser Drive, Pepper Tree Lane, Marrietta Drive, and Miles Drive provide access to the neighborhoods west and south of the project site. Direct access to the site is provided by Kaiser Drive and Kiely Boulevard. Fourteen access driveways currently serve the site. For Parcels 1 and 2, these include three gated-access driveways from Kaiser Drive, two exit-only driveways from Kaiser Drive, two exit-only driveways from Kiely Boulevard, one two-way driveway from Kiely Boulevard, and two two-way driveways from Kaiser Drive. For Parcel 3, access is provided by three access driveways from Kaiser Drive and one from Kiely Boulevard.

The area surrounding the project site is fully developed and consists mainly of residential development. Residential developments exist to the north and west of the project site. Santa Clara High School is located further northwest beyond the residential development. A US post office is also located further north of the project site, beyond the residential development adjacent to the site. Central Park is east of the project site. The project site is bounded by Saratoga Creek, single-family homes, and electric substation and commercial development to the south. Other land uses within a 1-mile radius include a mix of single-family and multi-family housing developments, three churches, commercial development, the City's main library, and an international swimming complex.

3.4.1 Existing Site Conditions

Project Site

The approximately 26-acre, irregularly shaped project site is composed of three parcels (see **Figure 3.0-2, Aerial Photograph of Project Site**). Parcel 1 is approximately 5 acres, Parcel 2 is approximately 18 acres, and Parcel 3 is approximately 3 acres. Parcels 1 and 2 are contiguous and located south of Kaiser Drive and Parcel 3 is located north of Kaiser Drive.

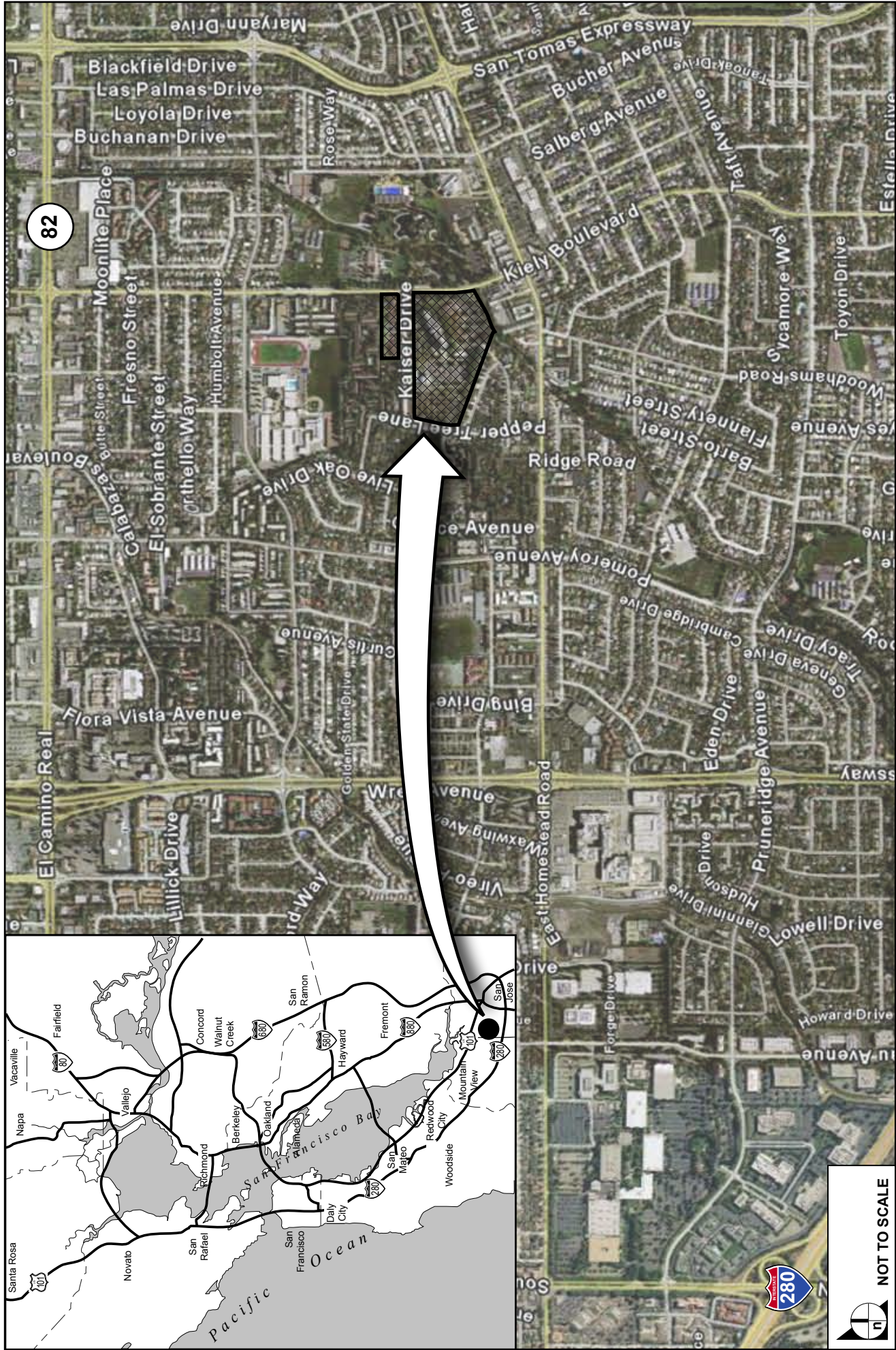


FIGURE 3.0-1

Project Location

SOURCE: Google Maps – November 2007, Impact Sciences, Inc. - November 2007



SOURCE: Fairfield Development - February 2008

FIGURE 3.0-2

Aerial Photograph of Project site

The project site is currently 85 percent impervious surfaces including asphalt, concrete, and buildings. The remaining 15 percent of the site is landscaped with trees and shrubs. The site was formerly occupied with a Kaiser facility. A majority of the hospital services have recently relocated to 3700 Homestead Road in Santa Clara, except 30,000 square feet of medical/administrative office services, located on Parcel 3, that remain in operation on site. These services operate within three buildings that are approximately 10,000 square feet each in size. The following vacant buildings are present on Parcels 1 and 2: an approximately 382,000-square-foot, seven-story hospital building with seven floors above grade and one floor below grade, and six single-story medical office/administrative buildings and four single-story mobile office/administrative trailers totaling approximately 76,700 square feet. The total existing building space on the site is approximately 461,700 square feet. The remainder of the site, approximately 80 percent, consists of paved (asphalt) parking lots and associated lighting, internal roadways, and vegetation. Overhead wires run in a north-south direction near the center of the site. Mature stands of trees, including redwood species (*Sequoia* sp), Canary Island pine (*Pinus canariensis*), Chinese elms (*Ulmus parvifolia*), and coast live oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), are present on the site, mainly in the southern portion of the site and along the southern facade of the main hospital building. Several fences have been erected around the property. A chain-link fence is located along the western, northern, and eastern perimeter of Parcel 1 and 2. A wooden fence traverses the southern boundary of Parcel 1 and 2, from Pepper Tree Lane to the Miles Drive cul-de-sac. A chain-link fence with wooden slats borders the Miles Drive cul-de-sac, and a chain-link fence is located along the southern boundary from the cul-de-sac to Kiely Boulevard. Parcel 3 is bordered by a wooden fence to the north and west.

The site is relatively flat and is approximately 110 feet above mean sea level. Parcels 1 and 2 slope slightly to the northeast, whereas Parcel 3 slopes slightly to the south. According to the geotechnical investigation prepared for the site, the project site is underlain by alluvial fan deposits and undocumented fill, and groundwater depths range between 12 and 17 feet below ground surface.

Parcels 1 and 2 are currently zoned OG by the City's Zoning Map and designated Residential Medium Density (26 to 35 dwelling units per acre) by the City's General Plan and/or Parks and Recreational and/or Institutional, and Parcel 3 is zoned Professional Office (OA) and designated Residential Moderate Density (19 to 25 dwelling units per acre).

Surrounding Land Uses

Parcels 1 and 2 are bounded by Kaiser Drive to the north; Pepper Tree Lane to the west; single-family homes on Marietta Drive, Saratoga Creek, an electric substation and commercial developments to the south; and Kiely Boulevard to the east. Parcel 3 is bounded by the Woodsborough condominiums to the

north and west, Kaiser Drive to the south, and Kiely Boulevard to the east. Central Park is located on the east side of Kiely Boulevard, east of the project site.

3.5 PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

3.5.1 Proposed Land Uses

The proposed project would develop a mix of residential units on the approximately 26-acre site. As part of the project, the existing buildings, including the buildings on Parcel 3, would be demolished and the site would be developed with a total of 806 housing units, including multi-family (apartments), single-family attached (town houses and row houses), and single-family detached at an overall density of 31.0 dwelling units per acre. The proposed land uses are shown in **Figure 3.0-3, Proposed and Surrounding Land Uses** and the site plan is shown in **Figure 3.0-4, Technical Site Plan**. The land uses are also summarized below in **Table 3.0-1, Gallery at Central Park Housing Type Summary**. A brief description of each of the proposed land use designations is provided below.

Multi-Family Apartment Units

The proposed project would allow for the development of up to 536 apartment units on Parcel 2 in the eastern portion of the site. The apartment units would be contained in two four-story buildings: north multi-family and south multi-family. The north multi-family building would house 274 apartment units and the south multi-family building would house 262 apartment units. Each multi-family building would be four stories in height (between 40 and 50 feet) and would include one-, two-, and three-bedroom units ranging in size from approximately 750 square feet to 1,290 square feet. The total proposed apartment mix includes 249 one-bedroom units, which would account for 47 percent of the units; 263 two-bedroom units, which would account for 49 percent of the units; and 24 three-bedroom units, which would account for 4 percent of the units. All units would have two covered parking spaces within enclosed parking structures. Guest parking would be provided on the private streets developed within this portion of the site. The apartment complex would provide 24-hour on-site management.

Single-Family Attached – Row Houses

The proposed project would allow for the development of up to 73 single-family attached row houses on Parcel 3. This housing would be three stories high (between 30 and 32 feet) and would include two- and three-bedroom units that would range in size from approximately 1,150 square feet to 1,650 square feet. A total of 40 two-bedroom units are proposed; each unit would have garages with two tandem parking spaces. The remaining 33 units would be three-bedroom units with two-car garages. Guest parking would be provided on the private streets developed within this portion of the project site.